

## FYI: Connecticut's Absentee Ballot Process

In Connecticut, the Town Clerk in each town manages the town's absentee ballot process.

### **Absentee Ballot Applications**

Under Connecticut law, **in order to vote by absentee ballot**, a voter must be an active, registered voter and have filled out an absentee ballot application. Absentee ballot applications are available for download online (at [myvote.ct.gov/absentee](https://myvote.ct.gov/absentee)) and at the office of the Town Clerk in each town.

**This year only, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in mid-September, the Office of the Secretary of the State will be mailing an application to every active, registered voter for the general election.** These absentee ballot applications are prepopulated with the voter's personal information and they contain a unique barcode, so only that voter is able to use the application.

Also due to COVID-19, the Legislature has passed Public Act 20-03 that allows every voter to vote by absentee ballot if they chose to do so in the November 2020 Election. Voters just have to check the box on their application for COVID-19, and make sure that they **sign and date it.**

In an effort to make it more convenient for voters to vote in the face of the global pandemic, the Office of the Secretary of the State is using a portion of the federal CARES Act funding, specifically given to Connecticut to make voting safer and to expand access to absentee ballots, to pay all voters' return postage for the AB applications.

**Absentee ballot applications are returned** to the Town Clerk's office via the United States Postal Service, in person to the Town Clerk's office (if open), or via the **secure drop box located outside of their town hall.** The Town Clerk processes the returned application, ensures that the voter is eligible to receive an absentee ballot, and enters the voter's information into the Central Voter Registration System. Each ballot has a unique serial number to ensure only the voter who requested it can vote with that ballot.

### **Sending Absentee Ballots to Voters**

The town clerk then mails the voter their absentee ballot, with the unique serial number and unique bar code, so the ballot can only be returned by that voter. The Office of the Secretary of the State, again using federal CARES Act funds, will pay for the postage to mail the absentee ballot to the voter, and the return postage for the voter to return it.

### **Returning the Absentee Ballot**

Once the voter fills out their ballot, **carefully following all of the included directions**, they can return the ballot via the United States Postal Service, in person to the Town Clerk's office (if open), or via the **secure drop box located outside of their town hall.**

**All ballots must be received by the close of polls, 8:00pm on Election Day.**

### **Questions About Absentee Ballots**

If you have further questions about the laws surrounding absentee ballots in Connecticut and how state and local election officials are working together to ensure that no voter is forced to choose between risking their health and exercising their right to vote, please contact us at [LEAD@ct.gov](mailto:LEAD@ct.gov) or at (860) 509-6100.

*Information from the Connecticut Secretary of the State's website.*